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SECRET

15 January 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Laos Material for the Department of State

1. On 7 January, Mr. Cross, Lao desk officer at the Department, called requesting a short paper on the continued presence of the North Vietnamese in Laos. The Department was contemplating using the paper in talks with the Soviets to underscore the lack of North Vietnamese compliance with the provisions of the Geneva Accords.

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2. This was discussed with Mr. Smith and Mr. Sheldon. The paper was prepared [REDACTED]. The paper was reviewed for proper sanitization by the DDP and by [REDACTED] also 25X1A showed the paper to Mr. Sheldon. The paper was cleared for use and forwarded to the Department on 9 January.

3. Mr. Cross informs me that some of the information was used in a meeting between Mr. Harriman and Kuznetsov on 9 January and that it is additionally planned to use the paper as part of a demarche to the Soviets on this issue.

4. A copy of the paper is attached.

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Distribution:

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RJS - 16 Jan 63

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SECRET

NORTH VIETNAM-LAO

Substantial numbers of North Vietnamese troops remain in Laos. Accumulating evidence provided by Laotian military officers in the field, by Pathet Lao defectors, and by civilian refugees from villages under Pathet Lao control indicate these North Vietnamese number over 2,000. They are located throughout those areas of Laos where the only authority is that of the Pathet Lao--and their Vietnamese advisors.

For example:

Elements of a North Vietnamese division remain in Ban Houa province. A battalion from this division is reported with its troops stationed in three separate villages: Muong List (VN 1163); Muong Nga (VN 1459); and Ban Hong Kuo (VN 1958). There also is a North Vietnamese artillery unit near Ban Houa town. This unit is equipped with four 120mm mortars and four 105mm howitzers. Other North Vietnamese are stationed with the Pathet Lao as military advisors. Among the locations where these advisors could be found in mid-December were: Ban Xan (VN 9659), Muong Penn (VN 8226), and Muong Han (VN 9781).

Near Tha Thom (UG 5300) in Xieng Khouang province, there is a Pathet Lao camp where 100 North Vietnamese troops are stationed. In this part of Xieng Khouang

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provinces, other North Vietnamese advisers are stationed with the Pathet Lao at Muong Yarm (VF 3795) and at Ban Nard List (VF 6492).

In central Laos, there is ample evidence that the North Vietnamese are protecting the corridor to South Vietnam.

North Vietnamese troops--in strength from platoon to company size--are located with Pathet Lao units near Lak Sac (VF 9510); Naope (VF 1021); Mahaxay (VF 1022); and Kham Kout (VF 7020). The most significant concentration, however, is in the vicinity of Tchepone (XD 3248).

Here there is one battalion stationed at the Tchepone airfield. There are other North Vietnamese nearby: a reinforced company (300-350 men) is with the Pathet Lao 18 miles northwest of Tchepone (at XD 2078). Another unit (at XD 1634) is near Route 9 seven miles east of Muong Phine (XD 0929).